

**PARTNERS FOR YOUTH CAREER PATHWAYS ROUND 7 YOUTH DEI
ON-SITE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING REPORT
GRANTEE: SOUTHWEST MINNESOTA PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL
(SWPIC)**

DATE AND LOCATION: April 27, 2018 – Marshall, MN

STAFF INTERVIEWED: Eriann Faris, Youth Program Manager
Leah Hastad, Disability Resource Coordinator

DEED STAFF: Cory Schmid – DEI Project Lead, Employment and Training Programs

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE ON-SITE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING REPORT

The purpose of this on-site technical assistance visit was to conduct a review of SWPIC's Disability Employment Initiative Project, to ensure compliance with state and federal rules, regulations, and statutes. The Minnesota Youth Disability Employment Initiative On-site Technical Assistance Guide, March 2018, served as the basis for discussions.

The categories reviewed were *Outreach, Access and Referrals, Program Implementation, and On-Site Documentation Review*. The on-site review was conducted on, April 27, 2018. All backup documentation and notes are on file at the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) Employment and Training Division in St. Paul, Minnesota.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The project intends to serve 75-90 youth with disabilities who also have one or more additional risk factor(s) as well as youth of color. The project will also focus on serving SSI/SSDI recipients particularly those who have a Ticket to Work (TTW). SWPIC will provide services such as work experience, OJT opportunities, career exploration activities, and career pathways programming through the DEI project. The DEI will also support other programs (WIOA, Minnesota Youth Program, etc.) administered by SWPIC in order to best meet the needs of participants.

PROJECT EXPENDITURES

Grant Amount: \$495,000

Grant Number: 7069600

Need for Technical Assistance/Corrective Action: None.

Expenditure Levels as of March 31, 2018: \$227,942 or 46% of funds are expended.

BUDGET

The grantee has expended 46% as of March 31, 2018. As of March 31, 2018, the breakdown of the budget, with Cost Category titles are as follows: Administration \$34,593, Personnel \$59,089, Fringe Benefits \$18,400, Travel \$4,025,

Equipment/Supplies \$14,761, Financial Literacy Training \$138, Contractual: Benefit Planning \$0, Contractual: Assistive Technology \$170, Other Contractual \$21,223, and Youth Wage and Fringe \$75,543.

REPORTING

The grantee has provided complete and timely monthly financial reports and quarterly narrative reports. In addition, SWPIC has included success stories from DEI participants.

CONCERNS/CORRECTIVE ACTION

There are no concerns with the implementation or progress of the DEI grant administered by SWPIC.

PROJECT GOALS, PERFORMANCES, SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

Currently, SWPIC has enrolled 82 youth into the DEI project. SWPIC is on track to exceed its goal of 90 by the end of the DEI grant. In the past year, 23 participants have exited the program. SWPIC has not had any and does not anticipate any issues with recruitment. Counselors continue to receive referrals from Special Education Teachers, counselors, and VRS. There have also been youth who have received services from SWPIC that refer friends to SWPIC. A total of 12 youth have earned an industry recognized credential. The credentials are either a CNA, welding, electronic systems, or mechatronics certificate. Those who participate in the welding certificate program receive credits from the Minnesota West Community and Technical College. These credits transfer to other schools and programs across the state. SWPIC would like to offer a credential focused on early childhood education. This training would include paraprofessional training that would lay the foundation for the participant to earn an early childhood education credential. The participant then could continue at a Community College to earn an Associates in early childhood education. SWPIC would also like to offer an information technology-focused credential. It is difficult to identify which IT credential should be offered because there are many available yet some are more transferable than others.

SWPIC has established a variety of college and business tours. The colleges that participants frequently tour include: Southwest Minnesota State University, Iowa Lakes College, Ridgewater Community College, and all five of the MN West campuses. Business tours involve various industries and include: Fagan Engineering, North Star Mutual, Action Manufacturing, and Runnings distribution center and storefront. The tour of Runnings' Distribution Center and storefront is a popular tour because youth are able to see how the work being done at the distribution center impacts the storefront.

Leadership is integrated into the programming provided by SWPIC employment counselors in a variety of ways. One unique way SWPIC incorporates leadership development by bringing participants to the Minnesota State Capitol to talk to their legislators. There are also leadership opportunities through the schools that help support the youth's development and readiness to transition from high school to educational or employment opportunities. SWPIC also encourages employers and

supervisors to involve youth in team building and leadership opportunities when possible and appropriate.

SWPIC will be purchasing a subscription to Minnesota Career Information System (MCIS). MCIS, was developed by the Minnesota Department of Education to help students track career development activities in the schools and build a career portfolio. The MCIS allows students to store information in MCIS beyond high school graduation and access the information into adulthood. There are different versions of MCIS including one for youth with disabilities, ABE, and VRS. The subscription that SWPIC is purchasing will allow staff to administer practice Accuplacer tests, store resumes for participants, and access other job readiness tools to support youth. MCIS will be utilized in addition to WOWI, CareerOneStop, Softskills Bootcamp assessments and activities. SWPIC will also continue to use data tools and labor market information developed by DEED. MCIS and the other assessments will also help support and inform the development and progress of Individual Service Strategies (ISS) for youth participants. The current practice is to update the ISS as necessary to reflect changes in career assessments, educational goals, and other opportunities.

Parents and families are involved in the service delivery especially when the counselors convene Integrated Resource Teams (IRTs). The DRC noted that parents see the IRT as an educational opportunity because parents are better able to learn the roles of each agency working with their young adult. Labor market information specific to WIOA Region 5 is given to parents to inform them about in-demand industries in which their young adult could work. This has allowed parents to see that a 4-year degree may not be most lucrative route for their young adult. The DRC and employment counselors have developed completed sample SSI/SSDI applications. Because the SSI/SSDI applications are rather cumbersome, the sample applications help parents/families fill the applications out correctly so it has a better chance of being approved by the Social Security Administration (SSA) the first time.

WORKSITE DEVELOPMENT

Grievances, discrimination complaints, accident reports: There has been one first report of injury. That is documented in the individual's participant file.

Participant orientation and safety training:

As part of the worksite orientation, participants were given appropriate worksite training and safety training. Additional safety training is handled at each worksite by employees at the business. This ensures that DEI participants understand industry specific safety procedures that are relevant to the worksite.

PARTICIPANT FILE REVIEW

Ten randomly selected files were reviewed. The files were reviewed for the fourteen compliance items and for proper storage of documents. All files contained the following:

- Enrollment Date
- Birth Date (Copy)
- Proof of Citizenship

- Proof of Right-to-Work, if applicable
- Selective Service (copy-for males age 18+ born after 12/31/1959)
- Social Security Number (Copy)
- Veteran Status (DD214), if applicable
- Low-income status or history of intergenerational poverty
- Parental participation consent form, for minors
- Emergency contact person and phone number(s)
- Address and telephone number

The organization's files were in order and had the required and pertinent information.

Exemplary Sites, Best Practices/Good News Stories

SWPIC determined that they would be able to serve about 75-90 youth with disabilities under the DEI grant. Currently, SWPIC has 82 youth enrolled in the DEI project. They now believe that they will exceed their goal 90 enrollees by the end of the grant.

SWPIC has partnered with JBS, a meat processing company in Worthington, MN. JBS is located in Nobles County which has the highest percentage of Hispanic/Latino residents (26.3%) in the state. JBS is a large employer in Nobles County and has been engaging local communities of color to provide job opportunities. From this, JBS and SWPIC have set up community meetings that involve communities of color to help identify strategies on how to their communities can be best served. The practice of engaging community members and a business partner in efforts to increase the participation of communities of color in the workforce is unique among the three DEI sites in Minnesota.

PARTICIPANT INTERVIEW

What is your name: Belle

What activities are you participating in through this program: I applied to jobs at 13 places and only got one interview. I heard of the PIC and I knew that they helped people with job interviews because they have done presentations at my school before so I thought they could help me get a job. I knew I did not want to work in fast food and the PIC helped me find a job at a nursing home facility. I am going to be sad when I am done working at the nursing home because I really enjoy the residents and they tell me that they are going to be sad when I leave too.

How did you find out about this program: I found out about this program because the PIC had come to my school before and I have had friends who got help from the PIC.

What did you like/dislike about this program: The services are very helpful because without the PIC my position at the nursing home facility would not exist. I also like the program because they help me stay on track for school. When I started at a different high school, I didn't think that I would graduate high school, but now I am graduating on time! The program also helped me see the importance of respecting authority, taking constructive criticism, and helped me improve communication skills. I would not change a thing about the program. I like all that they are doing.

What are your plans for school and/or work: I am planning on moving to Nebraska to live with my Dad and major in Special Education and sign language interpretation. I realized that I wanted to help people who have disabilities because I know what it is like.

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

The project is well managed and fully supported by leadership. SWPIC staff have done a tremendous amount of work navigating the complex nature of becoming an Employment Network. SWPIC has also made great strides to ensure that diverse communities are engaged in program development and the delivery of services.

REQUEST FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

At this time, there is no request for technical assistance. The organization would like to see more workshops for combining resources, seeing what others are doing/not working and possible networking opportunities.